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**Abstract**

With nearly two million students and over 100 higher education institutions (HEIs) in a relatively small country, it might be thought that locational issues were not of much significance in English higher education. This paper argues to the contrary, by exploring the distribution of students (full-time and part-time, undergraduate and postgraduate) and HEIs at the level of regions, counties and urban areas. It is concluded that the distribution of higher education opportunities remains skewed and hierarchical. The implications of this for widening participation policy are considered. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)